

# News & Views



**Celebrating Real Family Values**

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## AUGUST 15 - FROM FUNDAMENTALISM TO FREEDOM

On Tuesday, August 15, at 7 pm, award-winning author Marc Adams will share his journey from being a fundamentalist Baptist preacher's son to his time as a student and employee of Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. In his presentation, he will relate his story of coming out as a gay person, leaving fundamentalist Baptist Christianity and becoming a Universalist Unitarian.

Lambda Literary Award finalist and Silver Pen Award autobiography, *The Preacher's Son*, chronicles Marc Adams life growing up gay as the son of a fundamentalist Baptist minister in rural Pennsylvania where he endured a childhood of physical, emotional and spiritual abuse.

By choice, he went on to attend Liberty University where he was also employed for three and a half years in the student recruiting/university relations department. His book articulately reveals life at Liberty and the struggle to conform to the standards for which he would have been a martyr. He shares about his years as a so-called "ex-gay". *The Preacher's Son* culminates with his coming to terms with being gay and coming out to his fundamentalist Christian family.

Since its release at the end of 1996, *The Preacher's Son* has garnered praise from bookstores, reviewers, the mainstream press and the gay and lesbian media. Not to be discounted, Adams says, are the thousands of letters and e-mails that he has received from men and women, gay and straight, who have read his books and found themselves changed.

"Every time I open my mailbox and find another letter, I am incredibly humbled. I knew I had a responsibility to share my story. I just didn't expect to get such emotional and heart-breaking letters. I feel such an awesome responsibility when I read about how what I've shared has touched people."

In his talk to PFLAG Modesto, Adams will share some of his life story, share from his new book *(lost)Found*, as well as speak about HeartStrong, Inc., the organization he co-founded. HeartStrong, Inc., is a non-profit educational organization for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students of religious schools, colleges and universities. It is the only such outreach of its kind in the world.

*(All of Marc Adams' books and resources will be available at the program.)*

## Dates to Remember

### Meeting days

1st and 3rd Tuesdays

**PLEASE NOTE:  
SCHEDULE CHANGE**



**August 1  
BINGO !**

**August 15**

**7PM Program  
(see article at left)**

**8PM Support**

**August 20**

**Birdcage**

Is an informal, monthly social gathering for GLBTs, allies and friends.

Join the group to celebrate  
**SUMMER**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 20** at  
Tresetti's on 11th St. between  
I and J, from 5-9 p.m.

### We need your input

Do you have some news to share or an item of interest?

Want the newsletter by e-mail?

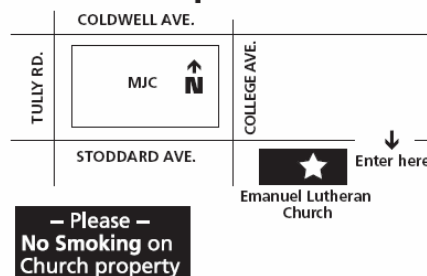
Contact

Marilyn Mettler

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or leave a message on the PFLAG helpline...527-0776

### Location Map:



### PFLAG Mission Statement:

PFLAG promotes the health and well being of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons through: **support**, to cope with an adverse society; **education**, to enlighten an ill-informed public; and **advocacy**, to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights. Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays provides opportunity for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

## Federal Marriage Amendment Fails...Yet Again

*Families and Allies Shift Focus Back to Marriage Equality*

**Washington, DC** – Advocates of discrimination in the Constitution were hit with another loss to their cause today [July 18] as the U.S. House of Representatives again voted against the Federal Marriage Amendment, and members of Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) are now shifting their work from fighting the amendment to educating about the critical need for marriage equality, why it is good for families and for the nation.

“The fact that this even came up for debate is yet another example of too many legislator’s misplaced priorities or worse – election year pandering,” said Jody M. Huckaby, PFLAG’s executive director. “The bottom line is that Americans are facing issues that need attention – skyrocketing gas prices, international tensions, and environmental issues, to name just a few. Working towards enshrining discrimination into our Constitution doesn’t make the list of things they want done.”

The U.S. Senate rejected a move to move forward on adding discrimination into the Constitution in June, and today’s 236-187 vote ends the federal level fight for the moment.

“If we want to talk about getting our priorities straight, let’s start with laws that expand rights and help all American families succeed, not cut them off,” said Samuel Thoron, PFLAG president. “Let’s not prioritize some families over others. Let’s make sure that committed couples have basic hospital visitation and decision making privileges and children have all of the protections and benefits that are available to kids who come from more ‘traditional’ backgrounds. The only way to get to this is full marriage equality, plain and simple. Stronger families make for stronger communities and marriage equality the way to achieve it.”

PFLAG’s more than 200,000 members and supporters are now shifting their attention to their ongoing work of helping to defeat state-level marriage legislation that will appear on ballots in a number of states in November.

“Equality – and this includes marriage equality – is part of what makes up ‘family values’ and PFLAGers nationwide will continue to fight for this basic right,” Huckaby concluded. *(PFLAG Press release July 18, 2006)*

### Tentative schedule of upcoming programs

September 5 - GLBT Poetry

October 3 - Gay Straight Alliances

November 7 - Living History Memoirs series

## Making a Difference: PFLAG Modesto

By Ross Avila, Stanislaus PRIDE Center writer

Because gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are daily confronted by ignorance and intolerance, the support of family and friends is essential. Fortunately, we have PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

This national, nonprofit organization helps promote the health and well-being of GLBTs and their families and friends. Its goal is threefold: to support GLBTs, enlighten the public on GLBT issues, and to act as an advocate in the fight to end discrimination. Local chapters meet in Merced, Modesto, Sonora, and Stockton.

PFLAG Modesto recently reorganized as a nonprofit corporation. This will allow it to do even more of the good, vital work it’s done over the past ten years.

With the help of many talented volunteers, PFLAG Modesto supports, educates and advocates for the GLBT community in Modesto and greater Stanislaus County. Working alongside many other local groups, such as MJC’s Prism Club and the NAACP, the group helps teach tolerance and promote respect for diversity. In addition to their wide-ranging outreach efforts, PFLAG Modesto gives scholarships to outstanding high school and community college activist students. It also hosts the Modesto International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.

PFLAG Modesto is headed by newly-appointed President, Gordon Preston, teacher and dedicated, straight advocate for GLBTs. His involvement dates to the late 1990s, when he began speaking out for gay rights and equal treatment to his local school board. Soon after, both he and his wife Colleen began working with the local chapter of GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network) and since then have worked selflessly as outspoken advocates for GLBTs.

As President of PFLAG Modesto, Preston hopes to continue the good work that those before him have started. He also wishes to expand the group by increasing membership in both the GLBT and straight communities. For this reason, he hopes to start a monthly speaker series for people to share their personal stories.

A great introduction to PFLAG Modesto is through their monthly Bingo Night. This free social event is held from 7 to 9 p.m. every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Modesto (College Ave. at Stoddard). Children are also invited to attend these fun and relaxing gatherings.

Meetings featuring presentations and support groups are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, also from 7 to 9 at Emanuel Lutheran.

Know of a person, group or business who is serving our region’s GLBT community in unique and important ways? Let us know: [newsletter@stanpride.org](mailto:newsletter@stanpride.org).

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